

BEAR FACTS

Planning Trends and Information from California State Parks

February 2004

Outdoor Recreation: What Californians Think

According to the soon to be released report *Public Opinions and Attitudes on Outdoor Recreation in California*, park and recreation areas and associated activities are important to most Californians. The statistically valid survey is an element of the California Outdoor Recreation Plan conducted by the California Department of Parks and Recreation and California State University Chico.

The survey provides key insights on areas of interest relating to outdoor recreation opportunities and settings, and participation interests in different types of outdoor recreation activities. It offers a snapshot in time as to what Californians think and how they feel about the relative need for and value of parks, recreation areas, facilities and services. The data contained in the survey can be used in a variety of ways such as suggesting broad statewide outdoor recreation trends, validating community demands for facilities or services, guiding administrative actions and preparing grant applications.

It is clear from the survey results that Californians place a high degree of importance on their favorite outdoor recreation areas and facilities and value their ability to play and relax in a healthful, safe and secure outdoor recreation setting. Among some of the interesting findings are:

- ◆ Over eight out of ten Californians (84%) consider outdoor recreation areas and facilities to be "very important" or "important" to them and their families.


(continued on page 2)

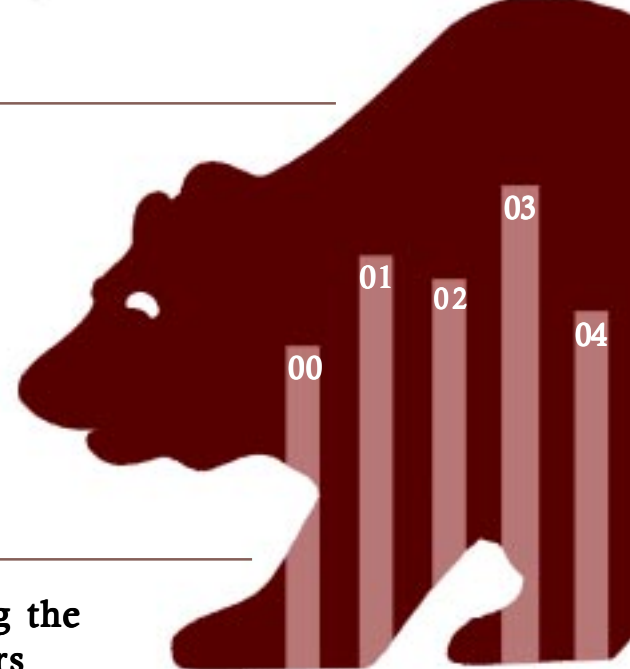
Running the Numbers

The first State Park System Statistical Report in over ten years was recently completed for the 01-02 fiscal year. That year the System had 3,734 miles of non-motorized trails. It would take someone 8 months to hike all of these trails at a pace of 2 miles an hour, walking 8 hours a day.

State Parks has 15,142 individual camp sites, each accommodating about 7 people. If all the campsites were filled to capacity there would be more than 105,000 people enjoying the camping experience.


Another 2 thousand visitors could be added to 227 group camping sites, which hold about 40 people each. Another 57,713 people could come for the day to picnic at one of 7,227 individual picnic sites. By adding in the 209 group picnic sites, the number of visitors could increase by about 15,779, since each group picnic site can hold about 75 people.

There were over 85 million total day use and camping visitors in 2001-02, an average of 234,000 visitors per day across the System. These visitors spent an impressive \$31,028,871 in user fees and generated \$11,645,371 in concessions revenue for the State Park System. The 1.22 million owned and 0.2 million leased acres in the System, were managed by only 1,762 full time employees and 820 temporary employees. These and other facts and figures from the 01-02 Statistical Report can now be downloaded at www.parks.ca.gov through the Planning Division web page. The 02/03 Statistical Report is also nearing completion. 



(What Californians Think, continued)

- ◆ Nearly 90% of Californians visited a local park **within** their community and over 82% visited parks **outside** of their community at least once during 2002. Nearly 40% visited their local community parks one or more times per week.
- ◆ Roughly 70% of adult Californians spent either more time or about the same time in outdoor recreation as they did five years ago.
- ◆ Nearly all Californians (96.7%) strongly or moderately agree that maintaining the natural environment in outdoor recreation areas is important to them.
- ◆ Youth participation rankings on outdoor recreation activities generally matched those of adults with a few exceptions in the typically youth-oriented activities such as skateboarding, in-line skating and pool swimming.
- ◆ Californians were generally satisfied with outdoor recreation areas, facilities and services available to them within their community, but 1.5 million Californians were not at all satisfied and over 4 million Californians felt that conditions were not as good as they were five years ago.
- ◆ Within their local community, Californians ranked the construction of trails and developing day use facilities for school programs as high and gave low rankings to constructing skateboard parks and off-leash dog parks.
- ◆ Outside of their local community, Californians gave high ratings to providing more open space in urban areas, providing more public use opportunities at lakes and reservoirs, and constructing developed campgrounds as possible improvements, and gave lower rankings for more off-highway vehicle areas and private concessions in public parks.
- ◆ Californians felt that city and county agencies that normally provide park and recreation resources should place more emphasis on protecting and maintaining existing resources over building new ones, acquiring new lands or offering new services.
- ◆ When asked how to pay for parks, perceived discretionary funding sources such as fundraisers, reallocating lottery and general fund dollars, bonds and higher “sin” taxes (cigarettes and alcohol) were fairly well supported, but increases in user fees, vehicle license fees and taxes received less support.
- ◆ Californians preferred simple outdoor recreation activities near where they live, that require limited equipment and no specialized facilities. The top five outdoor recreation activities are walking, driving for pleasure, visiting historic sites, attending outdoor events, and beach activities.
- ◆ When asked which activities they’d like to do more and which ones they felt public agencies should fund, the top five activities were camping in developed sites, trail hiking, walking, viewing wildlife and bicycling on paved surfaces.
- ◆ While motivations vary, the respondents most often cited ‘being able to relax’, ‘feeling safe and secure’ and ‘being in the outdoors’ as the most important influences to their enjoyment of their outdoor recreation experience.

The Public Opinions and Attitudes on Outdoor Recreation in California 2002 will be available on the Department of Parks and Recreation web site. A limited number of hard copies will be made available and may be requested by sending an email message with “Public Opinion Survey” in the subject line to atill@parks.ca.gov. 



National Parks and Local Economies

California's 23 National Parks, Monuments and Historic Sites add \$1 billion to state and local economies according to a recent study by the National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA).

Report Highlights

- ◆ Yosemite's 3.4 million annual visitors funnel \$320 million into the local economy, supporting 8,800 jobs.
- ◆ Sequoia-Kings Canyon's 1.2 million annual tourists contribute \$98 million and 2,400 jobs.
- ◆ Mojave National Preserve's 0.5 million annual visitors contribute \$5 million and support 121 jobs.
- ◆ Redwood National Park's 400,000 annual visitors contribute \$14.5 million and support 350 jobs.
- ◆ Point Reyes National Seashore's visitors contribute \$84 million and support 2,000 jobs.
- ◆ Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area's over 0.5 million visitors contribute \$16.9 million and support over 400 jobs.
- ◆ Lassen Volcanic National Park's over 376 thousand annual visitors contribute \$11.8 million and support over 276 jobs.
- ◆ Death Valley National Park's over 1 million annual visitors contribute over \$44 million and support over 1,200 jobs.

The report, *National Treasures as Economic Engines*, used a model first developed by Michigan State University for the National Park Service. The research model looked at the contribution to the economy within 25 miles of the park. Spending included lodging, gas, restaurants, groceries, souvenirs and other expenses, excluding admission fees.

"These places are the soul of America and the heart of many local economies," said Courtney Cuff, Pacific regional director of NPCA, the nonpartisan advocacy organization, "If they are to stay that way, we must invest in protecting them."

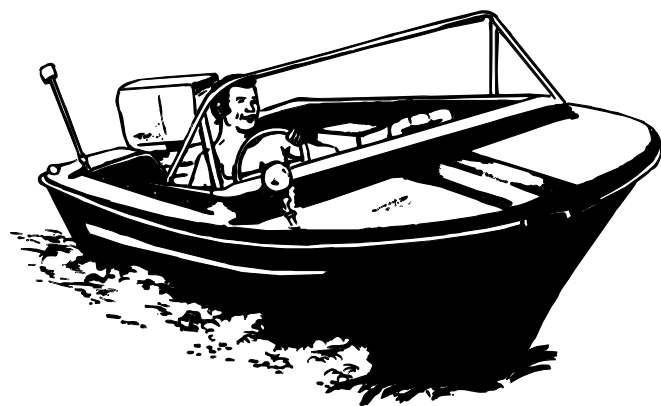
www.npca.org 

Which Park and Why?

These questions are taken from the Concessions Annual Report for FY 01/02. Can you guess the name of each State Park unit?

1. This park's theater and its films generate the most revenue of any State Park theater concession.
2. This park's Surf Diva Surf School used to cater to aspiring female surfers, but now welcomes anyone.
3. The largest horseback riding concession operates at this park along the Big Sur Coast.
4. Funtime-Fulltime offers a Marina Concession at this State Recreation Area.
5. Name the two parks with the most concessions contracts in place.
6. This is the only State Historic Park with an Artist in Residence concession.
7. One of this park's concessions is Jack Tar – the Seagoing Organ Grinder.
8. This is the only State Park with a concession for Naturalist Services.
9. This State Recreation Area has the most aquatic and water-related concessions.

Answers on Page 7



High Speed Rail—Impacts on Parks

The California High-Speed Rail Authority was created by the State Legislature in 1996 to develop a plan for financing, construction and operation of a high-speed passenger train system linking four major metropolitan areas from Southern to Northern California. During the following two years feasibility studies and a business plan were developed. Since then, the California High-Speed Rail Authority and the Federal Railroad Administration have jointly completed a scoping process and evaluation of numerous options for routes and stations. This 700-mile system would have a 200 m.p.h. design speed, use existing technologies and cost an estimated \$25,000,000,000 in 1999 dollars. Projected travel time between San Francisco and Los Angeles is 2½ hours. A \$10,000,000,000 general obligation bond to fund initial planning and construction was scheduled for the 11/04 ballot, but will most likely be postponed. Project completion is estimated for 2020.

High speeds require a dedicated and fully grade-separated, fenced right-of-way, no at-grade crossings and large-radius curves. The system will be double-tracked to accommodate the anticipated ten trains per hour. The right-of-way may be a minimum of 50 feet in width in urban areas and will use existing transportation corridors when practical. New right-of-way will be necessary in mountain crossing areas. Track will generally be laid at grade but will require, particularly in mountainous areas, aerial or three-bore tunnel sections (some as long as 8 miles in length to maintain minimum grades). All sections will have overhead power cables.

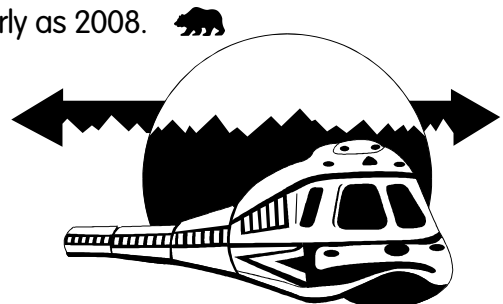
Representatives of the Department of Parks and Recreation have attended periodic briefings hosted by the California High-Speed Rail Authority and the Federal Railroad Administration over the past eighteen months for state and federal resource agency representatives. Based upon information available, it is believed that up to twenty-three existing units of the State Park System and two proposed acquisitions may be directly or indirectly impacted by the proposed project. These are:

<i>Cardiff SB</i>	<i>Lake Perris SRA</i>
<i>San Elijo SB</i>	<i>Carlsbad SB</i>
<i>Leucadia SB</i>	<i>San Luis Reservoir SRA</i>
<i>Castaic Lake SRA</i>	<i>Tehachapi Project</i>
<i>San Onofre SB</i>	<i>South Carlsbad SB</i>
<i>Colonel Allensworth SHP</i>	<i>McConnell SRA</i>
<i>Cornfield Property</i>	<i>Taylor Yard Property</i>
<i>Moonlight State Beach</i>	<i>Doheny SB</i>
<i>Old Town San Diego SHP</i>	<i>Tomo-Kahni Addition</i>
<i>Fort Tejon SHP</i>	<i>Pacheco State Park</i>
<i>Torrey Pines SB</i>	<i>Henry W. Coe SP</i>
<i>San Clemente SB</i>	<i>Torrey Pines SR</i>
<i>Hungry Valley SVRA</i>	

Undoubtedly, a number of other local, regional, state, federal, and non-profit conservancy lands and resources will be impacted as well. The kinds of impacts that may be created by the HSR that may be cause for concern include:

- ◆ scenic/visual impacts
- ◆ increases in noise and vibration
- ◆ changes to surface and subsurface hydrology
- ◆ wildlife movement
- ◆ geologic stability
- ◆ visitation
- ◆ recreation use
- ◆ trail and park access
- ◆ operations/management and maintenance
- ◆ loss of habitat and cultural resources.

The potential for mitigation and its impacts of is unknown. A draft program EIR/EIS, originally scheduled for release in September of 2003, will now be available to the public early in 2004 for a minimum 90-day review and comment period. The final program EIR/EIS is scheduled for completion some time later in 2004. At the conclusion of this process more detailed studies and engineering will be prepared and site specific environmental documents circulated for review prior to the start of construction, which could be as early as 2008.



Where's Arnold on Parks?

With a new Governor in place, many are wondering about future policy decisions that will affect parks. In the few months since Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger took office there are clues as to the leanings of the new Administration.

Governor Schwarzenegger was one of the few candidates in the recall election with an environmental platform that included parks. The "Join Arnold" web page included an Action Plan for California's Environment. The summary statement is notable:

"California's economic future depends significantly on the quality of our environment. We face serious environmental challenges, which have profound impact on public health and the economy. 'Jobs vs. the economy' is a false choice. Overwhelming evidence demonstrates that clean air and water result in a more productive workforce, and a healthier economy, which will contribute to a balanced state budget. . . . This administration will protect and restore California's air, water and landscapes so that all the people of California can enjoy the natural beauty that is California."

Initiative #4 of the Governor's Action Plan reads: **"Protect and restore California's parks and open spaces.** Many California families vacation within driving distance, often camping at state parks and beaches. State parks, beaches and trails also generate significant economic activity and tax revenue as a result of fees and other spending in adjacent areas. There is general agreement that park maintenance has been allowed to deteriorate."

"Improve Our Parks, With Special Emphasis on Access for Seniors and the Disabled. I will order the Resources Agency to develop a comprehensive facility assessment and improvement plan for state parks, beaches, and coastal access, with emphasis placed on investments that enhance local economies and access for California's seniors and the disabled."


The importance of parks in local economies is nothing new to trend watchers, park planners, and Director of State Parks, Ruth Coleman. She has ensured that the message about parks and their contribution to local economies gets out.

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The current budget crisis resulted in cuts that threatened to close a significant number of State Parks. To prevent such closures, the Administration approved an increase in State Park user fees to take effect July 1, 2004. The Department felt that fee increases were the only alternative to keep the system open and serving millions of visitors. Keeping the System open also prevents local communities and businesses from losing a major source of their revenue. More than 85 million people visit State Parks annually, spending more than \$2.6 billion in local communities.

For those who subscribe to the theory that "a manager is only as good as the people he/she chooses to surround them," Arnold's appointment of Michael Chrisman as Secretary of the Resources Agency is viewed with some optimism. "Michael's vast experience and high level of expertise in environmental resource management and environmental issues is invaluable to my Administration," said Governor Schwarzenegger.

Since 1996 Chrisman has served as the Region Manager for Southern California Edison. Prior to that, he served as the Undersecretary for the California Department of Food and Agriculture and as Deputy Secretary for Operations/Legislation for the California Resources Agency. He was appointed President of the California Fish and Game Commission by Governor Pete Wilson and serves as the Chairman of the Board of both the Great Valley Center and the Sequoia-Kings Canyon National Parks Foundation. Chrisman has served in many capacities related to agriculture, water and environmental issues. Michael Chrisman's previous government experience has won praise from both environmentalists and business interests.

In summary; at the policy level, parks are at on the radar screen; new Resources Secretary Micheal Chrisman is viewed favorably; and the role of the parks as a positive factor in state and local the economies is better understood. These findings don't mean that there won't be a rough road ahead as the Governor and Legislature struggle to pull California out of the worst fiscal crisis in state history. But challenges are being faced throughout California and park and recreation professionals have many reasons to look to the future with a degree of cautious optimism. 

PPIC Finds Strong Public Support for Beaches and Coastal Protection

Large majorities of California residents place an extraordinary value on the state's beaches and ocean, according to a survey conducted in the Fall of 2003 by the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC) and the Hewlett, Irvine, and Packard Foundations. Across geographical and political ideology, Californians display a profound desire to protect the coast despite potential economic costs.

A vast majority (88%) of Californians say the condition of the ocean and beaches is personally important to them, with 60% saying it is *very* important. In fact, Californians (72%) are far more likely than Americans as a whole (40%) to visit an ocean beach at least several times per year. Strong majorities of Californians also believe the coastline's condition is very important to the state's quality of life (69%) and economy (61%).

Consistent with the premium they place on the coastline, Californians express high levels of concern over coastal conditions and strong support for policies that protect the ocean and beaches. Over half (52%) believe the quality of the ocean along the state's shoreline has deteriorated in the past two decades, and 45% say ocean conditions are likely to worsen over the next twenty years.

Concerns about the coast top the list of environmental worries, with 53% of residents saying ocean and beach pollution is a big problem in California today. Specifically, 52% describe pollution from streets and storm drains and contamination of fish and seafood as *big* problems, while strong majorities say declining numbers of marine mammals (74%), commercial over-fishing (71%), coastal development (71%), and limited public access to the beaches (58%) are at least *somewhat* of a problem.

Support for many coastal issues crosses party lines. Two-thirds of Californians—including majorities of Democrats, Republicans, and independents—support restricting private development along the coast, even if it results in less available housing (69%). Three in four residents support protecting wetlands and beach/bay habitats even if it means less commer-

cial activity near the coast (77%), and favor creating more marine reserves, even if it limits commercial and recreational fishing (75%). "Californians see the coastline as a precious resource and an important part of their own lives," says survey director Mark Baldassare. "But the degree to which people are willing to protect the beaches and ocean, even at the expense of economic growth, is striking."

While half of Californians (50%) favor prohibiting new off-shore oil drilling along California's coast, even if it means higher gasoline prices, there is a notable partisan split on this issue: Democrats favor a ban on new drilling by almost two-to-one (60% to 35%), while independents are narrowly divided (49% to 46%) and Republicans are strongly opposed (39% to 55%).

Despite the state's enormous budget deficit, 48% of Californians support funding environmental programs at current levels, even at the expense of other state programs, while only 35% support reducing environmental funding.

Despite shared concern for their 1,100 mile-long coastline, there are regional and racial/ethnic differences in Californians' attitudes about coastal issues. Not surprisingly, residents of the South Coast region place greater importance on the shoreline, are more concerned about worsening coastal conditions, and are more personally connected to the ocean and beaches than those who live in the North Coast or Inland regions.

Interestingly, Latinos are more concerned than non-Hispanic whites about many of the environmental problems affecting the coastline. For example, they are more likely to view ocean and beach pollution (66% to 49%), declining numbers of sea mammals (54% to 40%), overfishing (46% to 32%), and public access to the coast (27% to 17%) as big problems.

PPIC is a private, nonprofit organization dedicated to improving public policy through objective, nonpartisan research on the economic, social, and political issues that affect Californians.

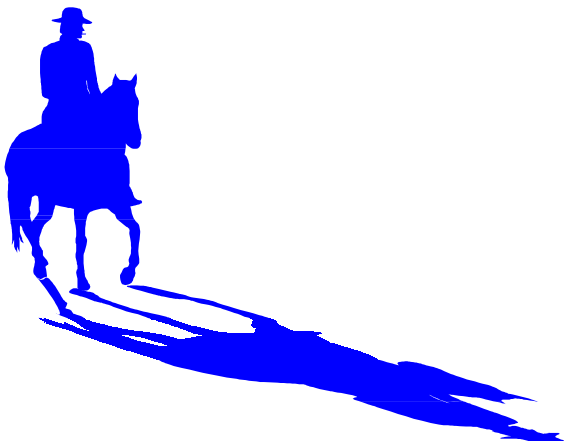
For more information see www.ppic.org 



Answers to Which Park and Why?

(From Page 3)

1. Hearst San Simeon State Historic Monument—Destination Cinema, Inc. generates over \$2.5 million in annual gross income through theater facilities in the Visitor Center at the base of Hearst Castle.
2. South Carlsbad State Beach
3. Andrew Molera State Park – Molera Horseback Tours of Big Sur generates almost \$280,000 in annual gross sales.
4. Lake Oroville State Recreation Area
5. Columbia State Historic Park has 23 concessions and Old Town San Diego has 20.
6. San Juan Bautista State Historic Park
7. Monterey State Historic Park
8. Anza-Borrego Desert State Park
9. Folsom Lake State Recreation Area 



20th California Trails and Greenways Conference


Think that budget slashing should be an excuse for not attending the 2004 California Trails and Greenways Conference in Folsom? Think again! Tight budgets call for creativity in making government work better. And since parks and their related recreation opportunities are too often seen as easy targets for those wielding budget axes, sharing new ideas is often critical to program survival.

The upcoming California trails conference offers a multitude of idea-sharing classroom sessions and outdoor workshops. Included in the pre-session workshops that begin March 24 are:

- ◆ a two-day UTAP coordinator training class
- ◆ a full-day GIS/GPS field workshop
- ◆ a full-day of hands-on trail stair-building training
- ◆ a half-day of grant writing shared expertise
- ◆ an opportunity to spend a half-day learning the new TrailWare software

Once the primary conference begins at 1pm on Friday, March 26, trail-related sessions will include Trail Liability, Resolving User Conflicts, Strategies for Future Funding, Trends for California's Trails and Recreation, Getting Young People Involved, Strategic Alliances, Trail Construction Techniques, and more.

Online registration will be available in mid-January for the March 24-28 conference at www.rec-trails-conf.cjb.net. For the best prices (one of those strategies for saving money during tight budget times) you must register by March 5. The \$79 per night conference hotel price is also limited, so early reservations are recommended. We're still working out the details, but nearby camping, including an area for equestrians, will be made available at a reasonable cost.

For more information please contact:
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BEAR FACTS – What Does it Cost?

When the BEAR FACTS newsletter was first developed in early 2001, the Planning Division looked into a variety of printing options. Printing each issue in two-colors or full color was too expensive, so we ordered a few thousand two-color “shells” with the masthead and blank sheets for the inside page. Each issue is printed at the Duplication and Reproduction Center (DARC). With the budget crunch on everyone’s mind, we wanted you to know that the only cost of BEAR FACTS this fiscal year is in staff time, black ink copying and some postage for non-departmental mailing. In addition, we have recently reduced the mailing list to conserve on printing and postage. The one drawback to the pre-printed paper is that we are unable to update information. For example, Adrienne Tillis is our new contact for address changes or subscriptions atill@parks.ca.gov.

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